

In the Office Action claims 1-49 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over prior art admissions (see on page 1 of the subject disclosure) in view of Liardet (U.S. Patent 4,864,790).

Applicant respectfully submits that claims 4-49 are allowable over the cited references. For example, claims 4-19 recited a combination of elements including a product having a surface with both a perimeter area having an edge contour and an interior region, wherein the perimeter area is relieved such that the edge contour is below the interior region. None of the cited references including Liardet, singly or combined, recites at least this feature of the present invention.

Claims 20-37 are allowable over the cited references in that these claims recite a combination of elements including a product having a surface formed from a cellulose sheet having a visual pattern that imitates another product, and wherein the surface is mechanically formed to have a surface texture that varies in accord with the visual pattern. None of the cited references including Liardet, singly or combined, recites at least this feature of the present invention.

Claims 38-49 are allowable over the cited references in that these claims recite a combination of elements including a polymer impregnated sheet that is embossed in registration with the visual pattern. None of the cited references including Liardet, singly or combined, recites at least this feature of the present invention.

New claims 50-52 are allowable over the cited references in that these claims recite a combination of elements including a laminated material having a surface with texture-relief corresponding to a visual pattern, the texture-relieve corresponding to the visual pattern

providing visual and tactile feeling of a natural product such as a ceramic or wood. None of the cited references including Liardet, singly or combined, recites at least this feature of the present invention.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant believes that the application is in condition for allowance. Reconsideration in view of the foregoing remarks and amendments is respectfully requested. An early, favorable action is respectfully solicited.

Should the Examiner deem that a telephone conference would further the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (202) 624-1250. All correspondence should continue to be sent to the below-listed address.

If these papers are not considered timely filed by the Patent and Trademark Office, then a petition is hereby made under 37 C.F.R. §1.136, and any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 for any necessary extension of time, or any other fees required to complete the filing of this response, may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-0911. Please credit any overpayment to deposit Account No. 50-0911. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

Respectfully submitted,

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